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I have always been somewhat of an exercise fanatic and “health freak,” as I have been referred to by some of my family members. Three years ago, I made the decision to move to Lincoln and undergo a career change by leaving private practice and entering into the field of corrections. Of all the things I had on my mind with the move, one of the big ones was where I was going to work out and find support for a healthy lifestyle. Before I even moved to Lincoln, I became a member of the YMCA. I went to a spin class the first day of my pre-service and happened to get a bike next to a very nice, enthusiastic lady. We struck up a conversation and discovered that we both worked for the State of Nebraska. She happened to work within the Wellness and Benefits Department and told me that when it came to signing up for insurance benefits, I should strongly consider the State of Nebraska’s Wellness Program.

I am so thankful for that “chance” encounter, because I signed up for the Wellness Program and have greatly enjoyed the support, accountability, and encouragement that it has provided to me. I am grateful for all of the preventive measures that are covered by the Wellness Program. Being in private practice for 13 years and having very limited insurance coverage, I had never had my cholesterol checked and did not go to the doctor unless I was deathly ill. Now I take full advantage of all of the screenings and wellness benefits provided through the Wellness Program. This has provided me with new incentive for maintaining my fitness level and striving towards a healthy lifestyle.

I continue to work out with the lady I met that very first day at the Y, and we have a core group of five workout partners who I refer to as my “Y Buddies.” We have found that our hectic lifestyles can only accommodate a very early work out time of 5:00 am. We were recently referred to as the “Fab 5,” but there are those who more accurately refer to us as crazy for working out that early five times a week! Together we lift weights and go to boot camp, spin, and tread mill classes. This not only provides for great work outs, but helps me manage my stress level and gives me a social outlet.

I am currently training for a triathlon and look forward to using the Cardio Log on the Wellness website to track my workouts. I am excited to have a visual display of my workouts and progress because of the added incentive this wellness program will provide. I have found that the different

wellness programs challenge me personally, as well as create an atmosphere of wellness within my State facility. It is always encouraging to see a co-worker with a pedometer on because I know they are participating in the Walk This Way program and are serious about their health and well-being. Being surrounded by individuals who are participating in the Wellness Program provides me with yet another layer of encouragement and accountability.

